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With the Colors

SONGS OF THE AMERICAN SERVICE

EVERARD JACK APPLETON

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WITH THE COLORS

SONGS OF THE AMERICAN SERVICE

BY
EVERARD JACK APPLETON
Author of "The Quiet Courage"

CINCINNATI
STEWART & KIDD COMPANY
1917

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No. 1.

TO THE
BEST FLAG OF ALL:
The Stars and Stripes.

CONTENTS

I—WITH THE COLORS

	PAGE
The Colors	9
Loyalty	10
The Old National Guard	11
The Alien	13
The 'Skeeter Fleet	17
Little Mother	18
Soldiers of the Soil	20
The Lady's Man	22
Cookie Jim	23
The Sandwich Girl	25
Bugler Bill	28
Heinie the Hostler	29
Our Job	31
Her Johnny	33
The First Fleet	34
Briggs of Base No. 8	36
The Penguin Driver	39
Waitin'	40
We're All Right Here	42
Reprisal	44
The Soul of Sergeant Todd	45
The Busy Lady	47
Overdoing It	49
The Givers	50
Hullo, Soldier, How's the Boy?	52
Beans	54
Behind the Lines	56
The Disappointed	58
Good-bye, Boys!	60
That's All	61
An American Creed	63

II—IN OTHER KEYS

	PAGE
Youth o' the Year	67
Unfinished	69
Paid in Advance	70
We Rode at Night	71
Now—and Then	73
Understood	74
The Christmas Spirit	75
The Reason	76
The Modern Way	77
Because ——!	79
That Smile	80
The Gift of Gifts	81
The Neighbors	82
Uncle Bill's Idea	83
'Lizabeth Ann's Picture	85
The Small Boy Explains	87
The Bold Lover	88
Imagination	89
Willing to Trade	91
The Lonely Child	93
Th' Little Feller's Gone	95
The Fisherman's Son	97
The Dog Confesses	99
Br'er Rabbit in de Bresh Pile	101
When	104

WITH THE COLORS

THE COLORS

IT isn't just colors and bunting—
The red and the blue and the white.
It's something heaps better and finer,—
It's the *soul* of my country *in sight!*

There's a lot of ceremony 'bout the Flag,
Though many half-baked patriots believe
Salutin' it and hangin' it correct
"Is only loyalty upon the sleeve."
But we who work beneath the Flag to-day,
Who'll honor it—and die for it, perhaps—
Get a slightly different view of the old red,
white and blue
Than is visioned by th' criticisin' chaps.

It isn't just for decoratin' things,
It isn't just an emblem, clean and bright,
No matter what its "hoist" or what its "fly,"
To us it means our country—wrong or right!
The sobby stuff that some good people spout
Won't help a man to understand this view,
But: Wherever that Flag goes, the man who
follows, *knows*
That a better, cleaner citizen *goes too!*

It's not just a banner to look at,—
For which we're expected to fight;
It's something that represents *freedom;*
It's the *soul* of my country—in sight!

LOYALTY

THIS is no time to quibble or to fool;
To argue over who was wrong, who right;
To measure fealty with a worn foot-rule;
To ask: "Shall we keep still or shall we fight?"
The Clock of Fate has struck; the hour is here;
War is upon us now—not far away;
One question only rises, clarion clear:
"How may I serve my country, day by day?"

Not all of us may join the khakied throng
Of those who answer and go forth to stem
The tide of war. But we can all be strong
And steady in our loyalty to them!
Not with unfettered thought, or tongue let loose
In bitterness and hate—a childish game!
But with a faith, untroubled by abuse,
That honors those who put the rest to shame!

There is no middle ground on which to stand;
We've done with useless pro-and-con debates;
The one-time friend, so welcome in this land,
Has turned upon us at our very gates.
There is no way, with honor, to stand back—
Real patriotism isn't cool—then hot;
You cannot trim the flag to fit your lack;
You are American—or else you're not!

THE OLD NATIONAL GUARD

YOU pull a lot of funny stuff about us, when
there's peace,
The jokes you spring are sometimes rough,
and make a guy see red;
But when there's trouble in the air you "vaude-
villians" cease,
And them that laughed the loudest laugh,
salute the flag instead!

Oh, it's kid the boys along
When there's nothing going wrong;
But when your country's facin' war,
You sing a different song!

The khaki that they doll us in ain't seen war
service—no!
The most of it has been worn thin a-loafin'
'round the mess;
Folks think it's great to josh us when things
are goin' slow,
But when the country's all het up—we ain't
so worse, I guess!

Then it's, "Look! The Guard is here;
Fine set of men, muh dear." . . .
(We'd like it better if you spread
Your jollies through th' year!)

We're only folks—th' reg'lar kind—that answered to th' call;
We may be dumb and also blind—but still we'll see it through!
Just wearin' khaki doesn't change our insides—not a'tall!
We're human (Does that seem so strange?) waitin' to fight—for you!

We mayn't be worth a cuss
In this ugly foreign muss,
But when the nation needs some help,
Why—pass the job to us!

THE ALIEN

(Of course, this didn't happen,
But if it had—
Would you have been shocked?)

SHE was a pretty little thing,
Round-headed, bronze-haired and trim
As a yacht.
And when she married a handsome, polished
Prussian
(Before the war was ours)
Her friends all said
She'd made no mistake.
He had much money, and he wasn't arrogant—
To her.
Their baby came—
Big and blue-eyed,
Solemn and serious,
With his father's arrogance in the small.
She knew how wonderful a child he was
And said so.
The husband knew it, too—
Because the child looked like him,
And they were happy
Until the Nation roused itself,
Stretched and yawned
And got into the hellish game of kill.
Then the man,
Who had been almost human,
Dropped his mask,
And uncovered his ragged soul.

Having no sense of right or wrong—
No spiritual standards for measurements;
Feeding upon that same egotism
That swept his country
Into the depths of hate—
He sneered and laughed
At her pale patriotism
And the country that inspired it.
There was no open break between them,
For a child's small hands
Clung to both and kept them close.
Shutting her eyes to all else
Save that she was his wife,
She played her part well.
His work—his bluff at work, instead—
Was something big and important
(Always he looked the importance)
That had to do with ships—
Ships that idled at their docks to-day
Because they were interned.
And there was always money—
More money than she had ever known,—
Which he lavished—on himself
And his desires.

Not that he gave her nothing,
For he did. . . .
They lived in a big hotel,
And the child had everything it should have
And much it should not.
She, too, was cared for well,
After his wants were satisfied.

Then—
The silent blow fell.
Secret service men called upon him,
And next day he was taken away
To a detention camp
For alien enemies.
Interned like the anchor-chafing ships
That once had flown his flag!
The woman, up in arms, dinned at officials
Until (so easy-going and so slow to learn)
They told her what he had done.
That night she stared long at their child, asleep,
And at its father's picture,
On her dresser. . . .
Did the wife-courage that transcends
All other kinds of bravery
Keep her awake for hours,
Planning, scheming, thinking?

. . . . . .

A week later she and the child—
A blue-eyed, self-assertive mite—
Were at the camp,
She carrying it (the nurse was left behind)
And the passports that allowed her to see him
One hour, with a guard five yards away.
Some of his polite impudence was gone,
Yet he threw back his head and shoulders
And shrugged as his wife and boy came in.
"Always late," said he, after a perfunctory kiss,
"You—and your country!"
She stared long at him, holding the child close,
Her own round, bronze head bowed.

Then, with a swift glance at the guard
Thoughtfully chewing a straw and looking
At the city of shacks,
She spoke.
"Did you know, Karl," she whispered,
"That my brother was on that transport—
My only brother—a soldier—my only blood?
If it had gone down—that transport—been
sunk—"
"Well?" said he. That was all.
"My brother—my only—Karl!"
"Well?" said he again. "What of it?"
Then—her little head lifted, her eyes gone
mad—
"This!" she said. "Rather than give
Life to another human scorpion like you—
Man in form only!—Lower than the floor of
hell itself;
Rather than have my blood mingle with
The foul poison that is yours,
To make a child of ours—
This: I give him back to you—
And recall my love—all of my love!"
Again he shrugged his shoulders,
Yawned—and saw, too late.

Swift as the eagle that drives a lamb to death
She whipped a hat-pin from her dainty hat,
Drove it with steady aim
Into the baby's heart
And handed back to the gulping man
All that was left of what had once meant joy—
A dead baby with red bubbles on its lips!

THE 'SKEETER FLEET

MIGHTY little doin'—yet a lot to do—
While the navy's standin' guard, we are lookin' out;
Patrol boats in shoals, good old craft and new
Hustle here and skitter there—what's it all about?

Speed boats and slow boats
Loaf around or run,
But ev'ry unit of this fleet
Mounts a wicked gun!

Pleasure craft a-plenty, all dolled up in gray
Grim and ugly war-paint dress, we're a gloomy lot,
Slidin' in and out, never in the way.
Gosh! It's wearin' on the nerves, waitin' round—for what?

Some boats are bum boats,
Layin' for the Hun—
But ev'ry boat that flies our Flag
Mounts a wicked gun!

Stickin' for the Big Show! Will it ever start?
When it does, Good night, Irene! We won't make a squeak.
"Boy Scouts of the Sea," watch us do our part
If a raider or a sub. gives us just a peek!

Tin boats and wood boats—
Ev'ry single one
Longs to get in action with
Its wicked little gun!

LITTLE MOTHER

LITTLE mother, little mother, with the shadows in your eyes
And the icy hand of Fear about your heart,
You cannot help your boy prepare to make his sacrifice
Unless you make yours bravely, at the start!

He is training, as a million others train;
He is giving what the others give—their best;
Make him feel your faith in him, though your troubled eyes grow dim;
Let him know that you can stand the acid test!

Because he's joined the colors—he's not dead!
Because he's found his duty—he's not lost!
Through your mother-love, my dear, keep him steady, keep him near
To the soul he loves—your soul—whate'er the cost!

You're not alone in heartaches or in doubts;
All mothers feel this burden newly coined;
Then call your trembling pride to your colors—to your side—
"Be a sport!" and make him glad that he has joined!

Little mother, little mother, with the shadows
in your eyes
And the icy hand of Fear about your heart,
There is this that you can do: "Play the game";
there honor lies.
Now your boy and country need you—do
your part!

SOLDIERS OF THE SOIL

IT'S a high-falutin' title they have handed us;
It's very complimentary an' grand;
But a year or so ago they called us "hicks," you know—
An' joshed the farmer and his hired hand!

Now it's, "Save the country, Farmer!
Be a soldier of the soil!
Show your patriotism, pardner,
By your never-ending toil."
So we're croppin' more than ever,
An' we're speedin' up the farm;
Oh, it's great to be a soldier—
A sweatin', sun-burnt soldier,—
A soldier in the furrows—
Away from "war's alarm!"

While fightin' blight and blister,
We hardly get a chance
To read about our "comrades"
A-doin' things in France.
To raise the grub to feed 'em
Is some job, believe me—plus!
And I ain't so sure a soldier—
A shootin', scrappin' soldier,
That's livin' close to dyin'—
Ain't got the best of us!

But we'll harrer and we'll harvest,
An' we'll meet this new demand
Like the farmers always meet it—
The farmers—and the land.
An' we hope, when it is over
An' this war has gone to seed,
You will know us soldiers better—
Th' sweatin', reapin' soldiers,
Th' soldiers that have hustled
To raise th' grub you need!

It's a mighty fancy title you have given us,
A name that sounds too fine to really stick;
But maybe you'll forget (when you figure out
your debt)
To call th' man who works a farm a "hick."

THE LADIES' MAN

BILLY is a ladies' man; Billy dances fine
(Always was a bear-cat at the game);
Billy pulls the social stuff all along the line—
But he knows this business, just the same.

He can march; he can drill
As hard as any rook;
And he knows his manual
Without his little book.

Maybe he was soft at first—ev'rybody's that;
Golfing was his hardest labor then;
Now he's in the Service (where you don't grow fat),
Digging, drilling, like us other men.

He can eat, he can sleep
Like any healthy brute—
And the Captain says that Billy-boy
Is learning how to shoot!

When he joined the Training Camp, Billy says, "No doubt,
I will draw some clerical position;"
But he's shown he can *command;* so—the news is out—
He will get a regular commission!

He can talk; he can dance
(He is still the ladies' pet);
But the way he barks his orders out
Gets *action,* you c'n bet!

COOKIE JIM

THE capting says, says he to us:
"Your duty is to do your best;
We can't ALL lead in this here muss,
So mind your job! That is the test
O' soldierin',
O' soldierin'—
To mind your job, while soldierin'!"

When Jimmy joined the colors first, he knowed
that soon he'd be
A non-com. officer,—oh, sure, he had that
idee firm;
But Jimmy got another think, fer quite even-
tually
They had him workin' like a Turk, th' pore,
astonished worm.

The rest of us, we gotta eat, and Jimmy—he
can cook!
(He makes a stew that tastes as good as
mother used to make.)
An' when he starts to flappin' cakes, why, every
hungry rook
Is droolin' at the mouth for them, a-waitin'
fer his take.

He's ranked a sergeant, but he don't mix up
with no recruits;
He rides a horse when we parade (which
ain't so often now);

But where he shines is when we eat; the grub
that Jimmy shoots
At hungry troopers every day is certainly
"some chow."

He's jest a "dough-boy," of a sort; it's Jimmy's
job to cook;
Don't hafter drill, don't hafter tote a lot
of arms with him;
Jest messes up th' stuff we eat, and we don't
hafter look—
It's *always* clean! So here's a good luck
and health to Cookie Jim!

The capting says, says he: "You rooks
Have gotta lot to learn, I'll say,
'Cept Jimmy; he's the best o' cooks
Troop Z has had fer many a day
While soldierin',
While soldierin'—
He does his work, while soldierin'!"

THE SANDWICH GIRL

THIS is the story as told to me;
It may be a fairy-tale new,
But I know the man, and I know that he lies
Very infrequently, too!

When the boys in khaki first were called to serve,
Guarding railroad bridges and the like,
Bob was just a private in the old N. G.,
Fond of all the work—except the hike.
When they sent his comp'ny down the road a bit,
"Gee!" he said, "I'd like to commandeer
Some one's car and drive it—marching gets my goat!"
(Bob was quite a gas-car engineer.)

Lonesome work, this pacing up and down a bridge.
Now and then a loaded train goes by;
But at night—just nothing; everything was dead;
Empty world beneath an empty sky.
Then the chauffeur lady got into the game,
Drove her car each midnight to our tents,
Bringing us hot coffee, sandwiches, and pie;
All the others thought that was immense.

But Bob, ungrateful cuss, he would never say,
Like the rest, that she had saved their lives;
He was too blamed busy, like the one-armed man
Papering—the one that had the hives!
Bob would eat the lunches—eat and come again,
Silent, but as hungry as a pup;
Finish with a piece o' pie, swallow it—and go;
Never had to make him hurry up!

Then one night we heard him talking to the girl,
Like he was complaining to her: "Say!
Can't you change the stuffing? I am sick of ham!
Have a heart! I'd just as lief eat hay!"
Did we all jump on him? You can bet we did:
"Who gave you the right to kick, you steer,
Over what she brings us? She's a first-rate pal;
Talk some more and get her on her ear!"

Bob was somewhat flustered; thought we hadn't heard.
Then he said, "Well, ain't you tired o' ham?"
"What of that?" says Wilcox. "Think of how she works!
Spends her cash . . . !" (All Bob said then was, "Damn!")
Grabbing up his Springfield, "Listen, you!" he snaps.
"That's my motor and my gasoline.
Sure she's spending money—but it comes from me;
She's my sister, and her name's Irene!"

Then, as he marched himself into the night,
We looked at each other a spell.
"We've ditched our good luck—he won't *let*
her come back,"
Says Wilcox. "Now isn't *that* hell!"

BUGLER BILL

BUGLER BILL—mild-mannered, shy—
Is straight. . . . But I wonder if Bill
would lie?

Bugler Bill is a pensive lad,
Whether he's workin' or not;
Serious-faced an' pitiful sad—
(Think he was goin' t' be shot!)
Whenever he bugles, some of us cry—
Reveille, taps, or mess—
With musical sob-stuff Bill gets by,
Plaintive and full of distress!

Bugler Bill is never real gay,
But built on a sour-face plan;
Bill wouldn't laugh, whatever you'd say;
Looks like a love-poisoned man.
"Grin, ye hyenas," he'll say as he smokes;
"*I* ain't a frivolous guy—"
"Thinkin' of all of the pain you caused folks
While learnin' to play?" asks I.

Bugler Bill, he sighs as he turns,
Shakin' his head at me.
"A long while ago th' bugle I learns—
So don't you git funny," says he.
"My audience laughed till it cried salty tears,
An' everyone called me a joy.
I was a clown in a circus for years—
That's why I'm solemn, my boy!"

Bugler Bill come "out of the Draft"—
D'you s'pose at *that* joke he actually laughed?

HEINIE THE HOSTLER

HE'S not very handsome or clever,
He's slow in his wits—and he's fat,
And yet he's a soldier of Uncle Sam's—
Now, whaddy you know about that?

We always called him Dummy,
And thought he wouldn't fight;
We sneered at him and jeered at him—
He was—and is—a sight!
His feet are big, his head is small,
His German blood is slow,
But at the call for volunteers,
Why, didn't Heinie go?

He's workin' as a hostler
(He used to be a clerk);
He don't enjoy his job, that boy,
But Heinie is no shirk.
"This is *my* country just as much
As it is yours," says he;
"I'm gonna do what I *can* do
To *keep* it mine! . . . You'll see!

"My father, he come over here
To get away from things;
He couldn't abide on th' other side—
Aristocrats and kings.
The Stars and Stripes mean liberty,
I've always understood;
So gimme the right to work—or fight—
I betcha I'll make good.

"As a chambermaid to horses
In a battery that's new,
The work is rough and mean enough
And wouldn't appeal to you;
But I've got my place and I'll stick to it—
Can any man do more?
I've never had a chance, like dad,
To prove myself before."

Perhaps he won't get a commission;
Perhaps he IS *dull, and all that;*
But somehow I feel that he's better than me—
Now whaddy you know about that?

OUR JOB

YOU mustn't *hate* the enemy—that wastes a lot of "pep"—
The Colonel passed the word around the training camp to-day.
The Captain says with modern war we gotta all catch step;
"Cut out the rough-necked rage and talk, and don't you think or say:

"'Pirates, rapists, murderers; poisoners and lying thieves;
Super-vandals, run amuck—black devils quoting sermons;
This world was mostly Heaven-made, our Chaplain, he believes;
But Hell itself conceived and spawned the Military Germans!

"The enemy is good at killing kids, and old folks, too;
Torpedoing hospital ships and blowin' up our plants;
But cogitatin' on their line of wicked things won't do;
We'll never hate 'em off the map—just give the guns a chance!"

So we don't go in for loathin', and with anger
we don't burn;
We're drillin', and we're diggin', and we're
workin' all the while;
To put 'er in the target is the trick we hafter
learn—
And ev'ry man's a better shot when he can
shoot—and smile!

The folks at home will spend their time
a-broodin' over all
The nasty devils do and on the details they
can dwell;
It's up to us to learn this game, and then—
when comes the call—
Pump lead into the enemy—and send him
back to hell.

HER JOHNNY

SINCE Johnny has joined the Marine corps,
Of course he will do what he's told,
And Johnny will be at home on the sea
The day he is eighteen years old.
Just what they expect of my baby
Ain't clear to his maw; my, oh, my!
But Johnny's a-wearin' the blue—and ain't carin'—
He's gone! Is it wrong if I cry?

It ain't been so long, I remember,
That Johnny, my baby, was sick
Whenever he'd get on a boat, and he'd fret
Till we'd land—which was usually quick.
But now, with his gun and his kit-bag,
He's answered the call, bless his heart!
And he'll square out his jaw and think of his maw
And go in to win from the start!

My Johnny's not fightin' for pleasure
(I know he'll be sea-sick, pore kid!);
But he said, "If I stayed, they'd call me afraid;
I gotta sign up"—and he did.
So now I sit here, sorter dreamin'
Of the days he was mine. They are done—
I'm proud; but I wish—I could fix up a dish
Of doughnuts for Johnny, my son!

THE FIRST FLEET

WE slid into the harbor here,
A line of battle-cruisers gray,
With hungry guns as silent as
The bands aboard that did not play.
The fog was soft, the fog was damp,
The hush was thick and wide as space,
But ev'ry man was standing at
Attention in his given place.

We'd made the port, with time to spare—
And Uncle Sam's first Fleet was there!

Then came those other navy men—
Our allies in this troubled cause—
Weary of holding back the Hun,
Clipping, too slow, his cruel claws.
Our Admiral, a few-words man,
Greeted the visitors. . . . "We're here,"
He said, and that was all. They smiled—
And said they hoped the weather'd clear.

But still those men with tired eyes
Felt mighty grateful, I surmise!

Around our Fleet—not very large—
We took them, thoughtful faces set;
And then back to the fog-soaked town
They went—uncomfortably wet;

But in those eyes a happier light,
That told him what they'd like to say—
That they were glad he had come back,
As he had hoped to do some day.

Another fleet, with fresher men,
Gave them a chance to breathe again!

Before they left to go ashore
(A crowd had gathered on the quay),
"When can you start to work?" they asked.
"How many hours will it be
Before you're ready?" With a smile
Our fighting Admiral replied
(And there was joy in what he said,
Mingled with pardonable pride):

"Soon as the enemy we meet! . . .
We're ready NOW—men, guns, and Fleet."

So that is how we started in
To do our share—the Navy's "bit";
They were surprised, but Admiral Sims
Had surely made a three-base hit
With what he said. . . . And now it's up
To us to do our hearty best
To make the seas the old-time seas;
Till that is done there'll be no rest.

It is a job to stop the Hun,
But—it's a job that must be done!

BRIGGS OF BASE No. 8

IT may be that you know him. A slim and
likely kid;
Red-headed, tall, and soft of speech and
glance.
He never took a prize at school (his talents
always hid),
And yet he's got a medal from the Govern-
ment of France!

He didn't kill a lot of men;
He never injured one;
He didn't hold a trench alone;
He never manned a gun;
He drove an ambulance—that's all;
But those above him knew
He'd take it into hell and back
If he was ordered to!

That night (he'd been right on the job
For twenty hours or more)
They telephoned again for him—
And as he cranked—he swore.
Half dead for sleep, he drove too far,
Straight into No Man's Land,
And there he gathered up four men
Who didn't understand
Or care what happened. . . . Then a chap
Sagging with gobs of mud
He shoved into his throbbing car
That smelled of drugs and blood.

The other roared, but Briggs, sleep-deaf,
Stared at the moon on high—
'Twas like some spent star-shell glued on
A blue-black, tired sky—
And didn't try to hear or think;
He only tried to keep
His car from sliding off the road—
And not to fall asleep.
The ambulance went skidding back
(His chains had lost themselves),
While now and then a growl came from
Its stretcher-ladened shelves.
Briggs never stopped, but when the groans
Were punctured with a curse
He told the weary moon, "At least
This flivver is no hearse!"
And slowly yawned again. . . . At last
They rounded Trouble Bend,
Base Eight before them—and that ride
Was at a welcome end. . . .
The blood-stained orderlies came out
To take the wounded in,
Opened the doors to lift the wrecks . . .
Before they could begin
There tumbled out the mud-caked man,
Whose mouth was shot away;
A man who stared like some wild beast
Finally brought to bay;
For Briggs, Base Eight, American,
Had brought (beside his four)
A German officer, half drunk
For need of rest! who swore

And cried, and then sank back again
And fell asleep. . . . That's why
They've decorated little Briggs—
Red-headed, tall, and shy!

"I didn't do a thing," he growls;
" 'Twas just a fool mistake,
And he'd have captured me, of course,
If *he* had been awake.
He tried to talk (his battered mouth
Was just a shredded scar);
But we were wasting time, and so
I pushed him in the car
And came on back. . . . Now, what is there
About that sort of stuff
To make a fuss for? I am not
A hero. . . . I'm a bluff!"
The surgeon smiles. . . . "If he can make
A capture in the night
When doing Red Cross work, what would
He do if he should *fight?*"
He asks, and looks a long way off
To where the pounding guns
Are making other harmless wrecks
Of one-time hellish Huns.

I wonder if you know him? A slim and quiet kid,
Red-headed, tall, and soft of speech and glance;
He doesn't like to have you talk about the thing he did—
And yet he's got a medal from the Government of France.

THE PENGUIN DRIVER

AT home, he drove a taxi,
A job he'd now disdain;
He's learning (on a queer machine)
To drive an aeroplane.
It doesn't fly—it glumps along
And bumps him, ev'ry chance;
His tumbling, rumbling "Penguin"
Out there—Somewhere in France.

It isn't fun to drive it,
But he's not out for fun;
He's going to learn to drop good bombs
Upon the no-good Hun!
And so, until he graduates,
He makes his Penguin prance—
His bumping, jumping Penguin
Out there—Somewhere in France.

As soon as he's a pilot,
(And earned his Golden Wings)
He'll take the air on high, you bet
And do some bully things!
The Prussians will be sorry
He ever learned to dance
With a rearing, tearing Penguin
Out there—Somewhere in France.

WAITIN'

BACK of the Front in this durn trainin' camp,
Day after day we are stuck, an' we swear
Whenever we hear th' regular tramp
Of th' men who are through and are goin' somewhere.
We're all of us willin', but why keep us drillin'
Forever? . . . Just waitin' for somethin' to do!

At home they are readin' th' outlandish name
Of a battle that's won or a hero that's dead
Of a stunt that had won him a place in this Game—
But all that I've won is a cold in my head!
While others are fightin' we're readin' or writin'—
An' the censors will see that it don't get to you!

We long for a scrap that will sizzle the blood;
We hone for a chance to bust in a head;
This marchin' an' diggin' in acres of mud
Ain't as excitin' as bein' plain dead.
War may be a curse, but this here is worse—
This dreamin' th' dreams that never come true.

All set for a mix-up that we can't begin;
Ready and anxious for whatever comes,
We're linked to the side-lines. . . . Ain't it a sin,

Spendin' good hours a-twiddlin' thumbs?
Seems like a crime to waste so much time
A-waitin'—an' waitin'! You'd find it so,
too.

My bunkie is peevish, and I'm out of tune;
The Capting's a grouch whenever we hike;
If we don't get into this muss pretty soon,
We fellers are likely to go on a strike!
We signed for a scrap, not a tea or a nap,
Or to wait,
And to wait,
And to wait—
Till it's *through!*

WE'RE ALL RIGHT HERE!

WHAT'S th' meanin' of the look you see
in soldiers' eyes?
Some of them you thought would kick an'
stall around an' howl;
But just listen (if they'll talk) an' hear, to your
surprise,
A lot of laughs, a lot o' tales—but never once
a growl!

Business man and bell hop,
Farmer boy and clerk;
Easy-going spendthrifts,
Men that have to work;
Firemen and brokers,
Chauffeurs still "in gear";
The army is the melting pot—
We're all right here!

Desk men and road men,
Men who sweep the street;
Coal men and plumbers
(If they have good feet);
Showmen and film stars,
All have mislaid fear.
Funny crowd; but we should fret—
We're all right here!

Keen men and dull men,
Razor-edged or dumb,
High-grade and low-grade,
Some, plain medium;

Feet upon the drill-ground,
Hearts all beating high;
You are glad that you are here,
And so, old top, *am I!*

That's the meaning of the call; ev'ry man is proud
He is in the common cause, with a bunch of men
Fighting for democracy, lined up with this crowd—
God! It's pretty nifty *just to be a man again!*

REPRISAL

SISTER Susie's sittin' knittin'
Sweaters, wristlets, scarfs, an' socks;
She ain't "sewin' shirts for soldiers"
'Cause she got so many knocks
From th' papers 'bout her sewin'—
Now she's knittin' pounds of yarn
Into things to send away. . . . Well,
I don't care,
Don't care a darn!

Hasn't knit no scarf or sweater,
Hasn't made no socks for me;
Little brother, he can rustle
For himself alone, you see!
Maw is on the Help Committee,
Paw is drillin' with th' Guard;
Brother's soldierin'—and sister's
Knittin' fast
An' awful hard!

No, they won't pay me no 'tention,
So I'm goin' to run away,
Join th' army as a—as a
Bellboy, may be, without pay.
Then I'll get a scarf an' sweater
And some socks, soon as I go,
From some *other* feller's sister
That I do not
Even *know.*

THE SOUL OF SERGEANT TODD

"I wasn't so much of a soldier," said the soul
of Sergeant Todd,
(Fumbling at his medal, that statement sounded
odd.)
"I wasn't so much of a fighter, but when they
came, and came,
Yelling and shooting, I just got mad, and I
reckon I did the same.
Into my trench they piled—just boys—
Making a most outlandish noise."

A Corporal's soul beside him nodded and mus-
tered a smile:
"You handled a dozen at once," he said; "they
didn't come single file.
If you wasn't 'much of a soldier,' or shirked
in your duty—well, say,
What sort of a chance have other men got
when tested on Judgment Day?
You fought them all, you did; and when
They quit, you started in again!"

"Shut up!" said the soul of Sergeant Todd;
"you're still in my squad, McQuade,
I say that I lacked what you did not lack—
courage to die, unafraid.
I was a coward, a trembling coward, deep in
my craven heart;

I fought with the fear of that fear at my soul,
playing no hero's part!
You can't understand it—but I
Had none of the courage—*to die!*

"And now that I'm dead," said the troubled
soul of the one-time Sergeant Todd,
"It didn't seem right that those who live should
think I have met our God
As a brave man does: his honor clear, with his
courage unscathed and whole.
On this high plane there is no room for a fear-
troubled human soul;
"So Sergeant Todd" (he bowed his head)
"*Fears no more*—for his body's dead!"

THE BUSY LADY

WE meet ev'ry week to make surgical dressings—
And one woman does it dead wrong;
I watched her a day—then I just *had* to say,
"My dear! If I may—that's too long!"
While I was explaining the teacher came by—
She's so crosss that her mouth's just a *line*—
And found fault with me and my work. . . .
After that
I'll mind *no one's* business but *mine!*

To-day I was filling my neighbor's slow mind
With War-Garden ideas and lore,
When a dog I don't *know* just *ruined* mine—so
I'll not advise *her* any more!
Then a talk that I gave to the Home Service Group
On "Waste" was *quite* spoiled—though 'twas fine—
By my bread burning up while I talked. . . .
After this
I'll mind *no one's* business but *mine!*

At a lecture on "Hospital Units at Work"
A woman (who looked fifty-three)
Ere the talk had *begun* started *crying*.. . . .
Her son
Has gone, she confided to me.

"But you should be *brave* and 'buck up'," I remarked.
"And *yours?*" she asked. . . . How did she divine
That *I* am not married? . . . Oh, well, after this
I'll mind *no one's* business—b-but mine!

OVERDOING IT

THIS horrid old war is right *in* our house
Making itself *at home,* goodness sakes!
The scraps from our table won't feed a *mouse*
We've cut out desserts, salads, and cakes.
Monday is meatless and Tuesday is dry,
Wednesday is *sugarless,* too, gee whiz!
Our plates must be *cleaned,* they tell us. That's why
We *eat* the garbage before it *is!*

So I bought a melon the other day
When ma was 'tending a Red Cross tea.
I wanted it *awful* bad. . . . Anyway
It wasn't so *big*—just right for me—
And then, just to keep from wasting a *drop,*
I *ate it all up!* . . . Our colored Liz
Says Pa told the doctor, "My fault, old top—
" 'We eat the garbage before it is.' "

The doctor was writing a 'scription note
When I come to, turned over and grinned,
And he frowned at Pa, as he wrote and wrote,
Till Pa grew red like his cheeks was *skinned.*
"Eating the garbage? Now, listen, man,
If that's your game it's good for *my* biz.
But if *I* was *you,* I surely would 'can'
" 'We eat the garbage before it is!' "

THE GIVERS

"I'VE given a lot of my time and work
To helping my country," says he;
"No one can tell you that I am a shirk
In the great cause of Liberty!"
(Perhaps you have met him?
Well, then, forget him!)

John Lampas was a Greek,
John Lampas isn't now;
He's just a plain American
And eating soldier chow.
He joined the army recently,
But first—he gave away
His touring car, his watch, his cash
To the Red Cross one day,
And then enlisted. "That's all I can do,"
He said; "and I'm glad to give it, for true!"

He doesn't ask for praise,
For jollies, or for guff;
He gave because this land gave him
A *chance*—which was enough!
He hasn't got a dollar;
He's just a khakied man,
But, somehow, he seems mighty like
A *true* American!
His cash and his watch and his auto he gave,
And then himself. Was that foolish, or brave?

So when I hear that other chap
Congratulate himself because
He gave "some time"—I'd like to rap
Him once across his selfish paws!
(Because I have met him—
I want to forget him!)

HULLO, SOLDIER! HOW'S THE BOY?

WE'RE not a bit deluded by the notion
That this is just a picnic, or that we
Enlisted for a trip across the ocean—
There's work ahead, not just a joyous spree.
Of course we sing and talk and sometimes dance;
But get this in your mind—that when we hear
"Hullo, Soldier! How's the boy?" as we disembark in France,
They will hear us answer, "Ready!"
Loud and clear;
They will see that we *are* ready,
Never fear.

Don't you think that we are just a bunch of flivvers;
We've measured up the job that must be done
And we know what we are facing, though the shivers
Don't turn our spines to rubber—not a one!
The Prussian scorned the world. Well, let him scorn it
(The world exchanges loathing for that scorn);
We haven't put on khaki to adorn it,
But to make the Prussian sorry
He was born;
And to send him back, his "Kultur"
Banner torn!

So it doesn't matter that some foolish people
Bemoan the fact this Army's on the go;
Unless it *is,* the harvest they will reap'll
Be slavery or death, they ought to know.
It isn't what they want or what we'd like—
It's what we've *got* to do. . . . When others say,
"Hullo, Soldier! How's the boy?" as we drill and shoot and hike,
They must hear us answer, "Ready!" Ev'ry day,
It's this nation's debt to France we've Come to pay!

BEANS

A SIMPLE ditty Private Smithy sang for me,
Entitled "Beans." . . . The tune was not a joy;
The words were commonplace as they could be,
But just to hear his earnest voice—"Oh, Boy!"

When first I went a-sojerin'
I couldn't eat the stuff
The cookies gave the bunch of us,
For it was rough and tough.
But since I've been a-sojerin'
And learned what *livin'* means
The grub we get tastes mighty good,
E-special-lee th' beans,
Especially th' beans!

We all were soft and flabby—
Our hands and muscles, too—
We had been used to easy things
To eat, to think, to do.
But when we tackled trench work,
With all that diggin' means,
We learned to like the sojer grub,
E-special-lee th' beans,
Especially th' beans.

So now we're very diff'rent
When mess-call comes around;
We've got our appetites all set
A-waitin' for that sound;

It's always "second helpin's"
Behind the mess-tent screens;
We're glad for Uncle Sam's good grub,
E-special-lee th' beans,
Especially th' beans!

A very simple ditty, you'll agree with me;
A commonplace production; but the joy
And unction that he puts into the melody,
The *splendid appetite* he sings—Oh, Boy!

BEHIND THE LINES

WE number hundreds of thousands, and
we're nowhere near the front;
We're pen and pencil pushers, or "serving"
the adding machines;
We'll never reach the firing-line, nor bear its
hellish brunt—
But where'd *they* be if it weren't for us,
workers behind the scenes?

Book-keeper, paymaster, spectacled clerk,
Doing our bit, though it's every day work—
We're all of us part of The Service!

We're the backwash whirl of the pool of War
gathering in the men,
We cannot fight as others fight, though just
as loyal and true;
We're the silent corps of the Men Behind,
over and over again
Doing our part in the war for Right, small
though it seem to you.

Figuring, checking-up, testing all day,
Knowing no hours—and not too much pay—
We're all of us part of The Service.

If it takes ten men behind the front to put one
on the Line,
(We all remember the speech that cheers the
backwash, anyhow!)
We're putting them there—and do not ask for
furloughs . . . That's a sign
We're not the *guests* of the Government—
we're in The Service now.

A cog in the big machine? Maybe—
But a cog that doesn't complain, you see—
We're *all* of us part of The Service!

THE DISAPPOINTED

THERE'S a Red Cross Button on his left lapel,
And a Liberty Bond pin on his right;
There's a U. S. flag above the Red Cross, too;
His patriotism's never out of sight!
His loyalty is spread on his hollow breast
(And sometimes he's pathetic, I confess),
But the button that he's most ashamed to wear
Is the one that reads

EXEMPT
U. S.

There's an aching heart in his 28-chest,
There's a look of deep longing in his eyes;
Behind his heavy glasses there gleams a hope
That maybe he can grow an inch in size!
There's a hero-throb in the heart of that boy,
Though he wears too much "scenery"—ah, yes!—
But the badge that hurts he really tries to hide—
It's the one that reads

EXEMPT
U. S.

You fellows that are in—have a heart for those
Who want to be, but can't! For they must know
A bitterness of soul you can never feel—
They haven't got a chance on earth to go!

So it's, "Stay back home with the old and unfit,"
(There's nothing else to do but that, I guess!)
The badge he'd be glad to throw a mile away
Is the one that reads

EXEMPT
U. S.

GOODBYE, BOYS!

LINE after line, you swung along,
You men, who only a while ago
Were just a part of the city's throng
Working for self, sedate and slow.
But now—what a diff'rence! Living throbs
Of the Nation's heart! Her reborn men;
And some who saw you gulped back sobs—
And wished you were marching home again!
Our eyes were dim as you went past,
For we *knew you*—at last!

We felt that every senseless joke
About a soldier, wherever made,
Would make *us* ashamed. . . . For now we choke
Whenever the Colors and *you* parade!
Wherever that O. D. uniform
Shall gladden the eyes of we useless men
We can't forget who is meeting the storm—
That some of you won't come home again!
You went. . . . We talked. . . . God blot the past!
For *we* know *you*—at last!

THAT'S ALL

TO take this trouble seriously,
But not to gloom or whine;
To never overestimate
Our strength, or to decline
To see this is no picnic,
But do our earnest part
With brain and muscles, newly trained—
To keep a steady heart!

To fight, but not to lower
Our standards in the dust;
To meet a savage enemy
Whose words the world can't trust.
To guard our foolish tempers—
Or keep them out of sight!
To never falter, doubt, or fear
The outcome will be *right!*

To laugh—whenever laughter
Is best to keep us fit;
To shake hands with privation
When face to face with it.
To give without complaining
Or boasting what we give;
To make this world a safer world
For those who have to live!

To part with old traditions
That hampered in the past;
To see that heart-wrung "aliens"
As enemies aren't classed,
But treated—while deserving it—
As human beings, too;

. . . . . .

Just to *be clean*—in mind and soul—
That's *all* we have to do!

AN AMERICAN CREED

STRAIGHT thinking,
Straight talking,
Straight doing,
And a firm belief in the might of right.

Patience linked with patriotism,
Justice added to kindliness,
Uncompromising devotion to this country,
And active, not passive, Americanism.

To talk less, to mean more,
To complain less, to accomplish more,
And to so live that every one of us is ready to look Eternity in the face at any moment, and be unafraid!

IN OTHER KEYS

YOUTH O' THE YEAR

"WRITE me," she ordered, nodding her head,
"A song of the rippling Spring that is gone—
A song that's different from songs that are dead —
Different as sunset is from the dawn.
Sparkling with happiness, heavy with dew,
Trilling and thrilling, all the way through;
Fill it with heaven's own laughing blue—
Write it!" she said. So I wrote it—"Love's Pawn."

I spoke of the sunshine caught in her hair;
I sang of the peach blossom's pink in her face;
I mentioned the heavenly blue with great care
That colored her wonderful eyes. And her grace
I likened to that of a slender young tree
Bowing and laughing when breezes blow free;
In fact, there was naught in the Spring I could see
Save this girl who with Love would ever keep pace.

She took it and read it, that poor thing of mine—
Old as a saga, young as the year—
Drank in the similes (flattering wine!),
Then gave her verdict, "You are a *dear;*

Surely no girl ever had such a song
Written for her; I will treasure it long;
It's *so* original—clever—and strong;
How *could* you know me so well—in one year?"

I read it myself—and grew red, I confess,
As a good workman should, when a poor job is done;
But the joy of her laugh and the sweet, swift caress
Overpaid me, a hundred to one! . . .
And then as she stood on the brow of the hill
And swayed in the wind, as Youth ever will,
I think that I heard her silv'ry laugh trill . . .
But perish the thought that she'd spoken in fun!

UNFINISHED

THE radiant dawn flows up the empty sky,
Its singing colors heralding the day,
And yet, before the tardy sun is high,
Unfinished morning fades and slips away.
While Nature holds her fragrant breath at dawn
Watching the loveliness she's made—it's gone!

From dew-drenched garden thrills a thrush's call—
That liquid note that all night long was stilled—
The living chalice, brown and bright and small,
Seems with the joy of living overfilled—
Then suddenly, unfinished, clear and sweet
The song is drowned in noises from the street.

So at the edge of dusk my love for you
Would speak to your white soul, would humbly come
To tell the age-old story, ever new—
But in the pulsing twilight Love is dumb!
Oh, heart of mine, within your quiet breast
Unfinished dawn—and song—and love—find rest!

PAID IN ADVANCE

WHAT is the cost of a day in Spring—
A wind-swept, rain-washed golden day?
A day that with joy is bubbling—
And dancing adown a world mad-gay?

You've paid for that day with days gone by—
The gloomy days and the days of rain;
The days that you'd like to forget—and try—
Days that were tuned to a note of pain.

Others there are who will never forget
The lowering clouds and the sodden world,
But—though you paid as they paid, eyes wet—
Your banner of courage was still unfurled!

That was the price of this day in June,
Paid in advance with a shrug and a smile—
While others complained, you heard a tune,
Making the gloomiest day worth while!

WE RODE AT NIGHT

WE rode at night, and the cut-steel stars
Daggered the black of the quiet sky;
Yet Venus had taken the place of Mars
In the Scheme of the Silent Worlds on high.
The ribbon of road ran straight ahead;
The night air whipped your hair and your face,
Our hearts kept time to the horses' pace,
And we were alive, and our blood was red!

We rode at night. . . . Though you did not speak
I nearer drew—there was none to see—
Love lent me strength to an arm not weak,
And I swept you out of your saddle—to me!
I rowelled your horse and he thundered on,
While in my arms you cuddled, and sighed;
And I kissed your hair and lips—and lied
When you asked if the coming light was the dawn?

We rode at night; and our love, new-found,
Gloried our way, as the pace slowed down;
Heart against heart, your fingers wound
Close about mine, ere we reached the town.
You cared, you cared! Though your firm white hand
Was cut by the reins you had held too long,
"Dear Cave-man, I love you," you said; "is it wrong?"
O, wonderful night in a wonderful land!

We ride no more, for the years have fled,
The wine of hot Youth is down to the lees;
Broken in body, I dream, instead,
Of the gold-shot Past that age ever sees.
We ride no more. . . . Yet the scar is still there
On the brave little hand that I kissed that night,
And my love is as strong as the hand is white;
But I wonder—I wonder—do *you* still care?

NOW—AND THEN

A THOUSAND years from now, how will
this earth
Conduct itself? Will there be wars, and men
Inventing things? Or will there be a dearth
Of ideas (such as we feel, now and then?)
Nobody knows. We can surmise, perchance—
But glancing that far off is quite some glance!

A thousand years from now—in Time's swift
flight—
The areoplane itself may be passe,
And transportation on a beam of light
The natural and the ordinary way.
Men may have bodies made of metals cold
To match the hearts and brains those bodies
hold!

A thousand years from now—why should we
care
What Science then brings forth—we won't
be here
To worry over things or to compare
The present with our past—won't that be
queer?
But men, as now, will hope (as we have done)
That each new year will be a better one!

UNDERSTOOD

OUT of the ruck and the roar of life
He stepped aside to rest one day,
And the flowers that grew along the way
Lifted him out of the wearisome strife
That had claimed his every waking thought
For years . . . and a miracle had been wrought!

"Why have I never seen the rose
Just as a *rose* before?" asked he.
"Always its cost was the point to me,
And not its sweetness! Do you suppose
That all these years — how long, God knows!—
I really have not *understood* the rose?"

Walking along the quiet street
He noted a sick and fretting child;
And he waved his hand and paused and smiled
Till the baby laughed—and its laugh was sweet.
His eyes were dim as his hand he kissed
To the child, and he whispered, "And *that* I have missed!"

To the end of the day that was full of care
The song in his heart was strong and new,
And the woman who loved him heard it too:
"Now that his soul is awake, I dare
Hope that he understands me," she said;
But I fear he didn't—until he was dead!

THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

"A MERRY CHRISTMAS!" You who make each day
A little less unhappy for some soul
Weighted with sorrow; you who have been gay
For others' sake—although you paid the toll
In the still watches of the weary night,
Fighting despair. You who have faced the world
With spirit and put cowardice to flight;
You, with your rugged banner still unfurled—
"A Merry Christmas!" For in you I see
The Vision of the Man that I would be!

"A Merry Christmas!" Through the winter chill,
The singing spring—hot summer and drear fall,
You go your way, seeking for good, not ill,
Remembering life's joy and not its gall;
Clasping the hand that trembles, when you may,
Spending your love whole-heartedly the while
For those who need it *now,* nor wait that day
When they no longer care for word or smile.
Doing your part with all sincerity—
A Vision of the Man that I would be!

THE REASON

THE fetching airs you have; the way you sing, dear;
The pretty uplift of your round, firm chin;
Into my heart the sunshine daily bring, dear;
To be downcast when you're here were a sin!
Yet ev'ry motion, ev'ry smile and word, dear,
I know full well—and lost are their effect.
All of your bell-like tones you see, I've heard, dear,
When they were meant for me—and came direct.

That golden hair! How well you know its worth, dear,
To draw enraptured praise from lovers bold!
I, too, know well that from its very birth, dear,
Its meshes have entrapped the young and old.
Yet, when I watch you laughing, teasing—you, dear,
Who have been given such a hold on hearts,
I do not thrill as all the others do, dear;
Lost on me (in a manner) are your arts!

Not that I'm jealous, indifferent, or cold, dear;
Not that I don't approve of all your charms;
Not that you're "just a little bit too old," dear;
Nor that you are a tiny babe in arms!
No, no; you're sweet, and fresh, and fair, dear,
Unspoiled, delightful—really "all the rage."
But somehow I can't seem to rightly care, dear—
I wooed your mother—when she was your age!

THE MODERN WAY

OF tender missives—decorated treasures—
Of violets and roses, passing sweet;
Of throbbing heart-songs, tuned to lilting measures;
Of fervent verse—with somewhat halting feet;
Of every dainty Valentine that's fashioned
You've had a rather goodly share each year;
So will you take, in place of love-impassioned
Epistles, something quieter, my dear?
Three words I'll send—that is, if they're enough
To take the place of all that flossy stuff!

Throughout the year life is so full of trouble,
Saint Valentine, alas! is shoved aside;
Beneath grim work the lover's back must double,
And then he lets poor sentiment go slide!
We try to think of what you'd have us say, dear,
But when we've coaxed a good thought half way out,
A money-making idea's in the way, dear,
And then Love's gentle troops are put to rout.
So—with a business missive in each hand—
Will three words do? Or do you more demand?

Gone are the days when troubadors sang daily
Of hearts and flowers, lips and eyes and hair;
We take (I fear) our deep emotions gaily,
And think we haven't time to love or care.
Yet once a year it shouldn't be impossible
To Valentine a little, that is true;
Then gloss the faults of mine you think are glossible,
And I will troubador a bit for you;
So, by the stars that shine above you,
Hark to my valentine, my dear, *I love you!*

BECAUSE—!

THIS thing of writing "homely verse,"
With country phrases, jokes and slang;
With "jiminies!" "by hecks!" and such,
With "backwoods" odor, taste and tang—
This thing, I say, of making light
Of country life is funny—NOT!
I'd like to know where we would be
If farms were all to go to pot!

We talk a lot of "backyard farms,"
"Intensive gard'ning"—"how to raise
All vegetables that you need
On ten square feet in twenty days."
We figure fortunes that six hens
Will bring us—if we keep 'em penned;
And yet, when farmers are the butt
Of jokes, who rises to defend?

I'm weary of this silly pose,
This pseudo-humor, sickly wit;
I will not laugh or even smile
When at the farmers jokesmiths hit.
Especially this time of year
I do denounce it! (Uncle Jim
Out on his farm lives well—and he
Has asked us all to visit him!)

THAT SMILE

I SURE do like that kid, although I know
He's rotten spoiled, and ought to be suppressed.
He's boiling over with boy-nonsense! So
The neighbors have no chance to get a rest.
Not bad, you understand; just "some unlucky"
In getting caught at things, once in a while;
Yet when he does, he never runs—he's plucky!
But plays that smile of his, that flashing smile.

Sometimes when he has done a foolish thing—
Like "hoeing weeds" with our best garden hose,
Or in the rose bed "built a min'rul spring,"
He's bound to make me peevish, goodness knows!
Yet when he tries to " 'splain it all" to me,
I don't succumb a moment to his guile;
I'm stern, as stern, indeed, as I can be—
Until he smiles that mother-given smile!

Perhaps he doesn't understand how strong
A weapon he possesses—Gracious me!
Disarmed by it, I can not right the wrong
By scolding him, however forcefully.
I do believe, if Fate itself were bent
On breaking him, 'twould hesitate a while
And feel ashamed! . . . He wins without intent
Because—God bless him!—he knows *when* to smile.

THE GIFT OF GIFTS

IF Antoinette were sitting here before the cheery blaze,
And she should ask me what I'd like to-morrow—day of days—
Would not my heart leap to my mouth, as any chap's would do,
While leaning down to her pink ear, I softly whispered, "You!"

If Antoinette were just to give me half a chance to say
What gift of gifts I'd like the best, how long would I delay
In taking her into my arms and keeping her there, too,
While earnestly I answer her with one brief, heartfelt "You!"

If Antoinette, dear Antoinette, were simply to suggest
That question, don't you think that I would quickly do the rest?
Well, you'd be wrong, because, alas! a year ago—or two—
She asked Jim what he wanted, and the lucky chap said "You!"

THE NEIGHBORS

FOR years and years I practiced—
Tum-tum, tum-tum, tee-tum!
Pounding up and down the scale,
White keys, black keys—
They all fell beneath my faithful hammering;
And then—my pretty neighbor across the street
Put in a player-piano that could tear a hole
Through classics that I'd never learned even to dent!
I was mad—hopping mad—
But I got even with her.
(She was studying for the operatic stage.)
I bought a phonograph—cheap—
And some records—not cheap.
They made her gargling voice
Sound like an imitation with a small i.
Then we both laughed—and quit our exercises.
To-day she's a moving picture actress,
Using her big eyes in a financially-effective way,
While I write things in prose or jingle
Or verse that is free-on-bail.
Sometimes I get by with it; and
Sometimes she doesn't spoil a film—
Isn't the public lucky that we didn't
Stick to our callings?

UNCLE BILL'S IDEA

I'VE figgered out that worryin' don't pay a little bit,
Fer every feller's got to have some trouble in his day;
An' wonderin' what's comin' next don't help to sidetrack hit—
You can't foretell afflictions, or stop 'em, thataway!
It's better jest to take what's sent
And stand it, ef you ain't content!

Looks like to me that every one has got a large amount
Of things to bear that he don't like, as through this life he goes;
And though of happy days we're apt to lose the rightful count,
Things even up before we die, as every old man knows.
There ain't no great monopoly
On sickness ner bad luck, I gee!

We've got to stand our share of pain and meet a heap of sorrow;
We've got to shoulder burdens that no one likes to tote;
But worryin' about the load, and thinkin' of th' morrow
Don't make it one mite easier, er cheerfuller, I note!

Th' way to do is jest t' grin
And hope for better times ag'in;
"But I *can't* grin!" some people say.
Then don't—but bear it, anyway!

'LIZABETH ANN'S PICTURE

MA wanted a good, new picture of me; so
pa says, " 'Lizabeth Ann,
You come down town at noon to-day, and we'll
go to the picture man;
But don't tell mother—we'll have a surprise for
her on Christmas day,
And give her a real nice photograft—I know
just what she will say."
"Oh, goody!" I says, "I am awful glad! I'll
be there at noon, you see."
(I like to have a secret with pa—it's awful
much fun for me.)

I runned away at 'leven o'clock, and ma didn't
see me go,
Although I had dressed in my very best—and
that takes time, you know—
My party frock, and my best kid shoes; my
furs and my "picture" hat,
And my new red coat—the one she says, "Be
careful, my dear, of that."
And when I got to his office, pa looked awful
surprised, and said,
"Dear me, what a dressed-up little girl! Why,
really, you turn my head!"

And then we went to the picture man. He's
nice enough, I s'pose,
But what do you think he said to me? "You
seem to be mostly clothes!"

So pa and the man made me *undress,* till all
that I had on me
Was my shirtwaist slip—my arms and neck was
bare as they both could be!
It made me feel umbarrassed! And then I
guess that I nearly cried,
But pa just patted me on the head and said *he*
was satisfied.

And now the pictures are finished up, and one
is already framed;
But ma'll be mad, I am pretty sure—I know
that *I* feel ashamed;
For all that you see is my head and neck—and
not a bit of my dress—
She'll think I was funny to go down-town with
so little on, I guess!
Yet pa says, "Never you mind, my dear—blame
it on me or the man;
But mother will like it, you see if she don't—she
wanted *you,* 'Lizabeth Ann."

THE SMALL BOY EXPLAINS

SOME people say the sky is blue
Acause it's warshed by rains up there;
I dunno if 'at's so, do you?
And I don't care—and I don't care!

I ain't no sky, an' I don't like
To have my face warshed, anyhow;
My nurse says I'm a "naughty tike
To run away" or raise a row.

But ef she daubed mud on like this
A-purpose, so's the boys would play
With her—and not call her a "sis,"
She'd hate to warsh it all away!

That's why the blue sky'll never mean
A in-spi-ra-tion er a "joy";
A-course it can be nice an' clean—
It won't be called a "sissy-boy."

THE BOLD LOVER

HE held her hand, and joy shone in his eyes;
The world and all therein to him was fair;
What mattered now the gloomy, lowering skies?
For what the future held he did not care!
He only knew he loved her and that she
Was everything a real sweetheart should be.

He held her hand. . . . The car was crowded, too;
The passengers could not suppress their smiles.
The love he felt, perhaps, obscured his view,
So wrapt was he in all her pretty wiles.
And when he kissed her rosy lips, a hush
Fell on them as they saw her slowly blush!

He held her hand and gazed about with pride,
As though to challenge those who'd say him nay;
He held her hand—and nestling to her side,
The interested audience heard him say;
"Oh, Momie, dear, you're sweet as any rose—
I love you more dan *any*body knows."

IMAGINATION

ONCET, when I was a gret big man, I got
mad at the way
Ol' nurses bossed the childruns an' so I wouldn't
stay;
I jest got up and PUSHED MY HOUSE right
over—yes, I did;
An' then I turned the streets all round, and
runned away and hid!
When I come back, my childruns was cryin'
awful loud,
Fer nobody knowed *wher* they lived, an' there
was *such* a crowd.
I says, "Now, folks must shet their eyes—don't
open them a crack!"—
An' then I straightened out the streets, an' put
the houses back.

'N oncet I was a NELUPHANT, as big as all out-
doors,
'N every time I turned around it shook the
roofs and floors;
I walked down to the river, and I drunk it up—
ALL up,
Jest like it was some cambric tea in my ol' silver
cup.
An' when the people come fer me, I jest set
down, kerplunk!
An' squashed 'em flat—an' picked them up—an'
packed 'em in my trunk!

'N then I TWIST MY TRUNK OFF, an' throwed
it all away—
You better let me go, Louise—I MIGHT do that
to-day!

You won't? All right—you'd BETTER DID, for
one time long ago,
Before I gotter be a boy, I was a BEAR—oh,
no—
I was a SNAKE—a yaller snake, an' I was TEN
MILES long,
'N all I et was nurse girls—yes, I DID, although
'twas wrong.
That was a million years ago, but something—
inside me—
Tells me I'm goin' to be a snake AGAIN—jest
watch and see!
You don't believe a word I say? Well, I don't
care—I DO—
How could I 'MEMBER all these things, unlessen
they was true?

WILLING TO TRADE

THE doctor brung a baby up to our house last week—
A little bit of thing it is—but my! it's gotta squeak!
It makes a noise that's twice as big as you expect to hear,
And then ma says, "Go right away—you mustn't tease him, dear!"
She seems to like it more than me—
But I ain't jealous, no, siree!

I told the boys, and Billy Black, he says, "Well, that is nice,
But I would rather have my dog—they're worth more at the price,
For pa says babies cost a lot to feed and dress and train,
And Rover, he is smart, he is, and gotter splendid brain!"
I kinder feel that very way—
But ma says baby's come to stay.

Frank Brown has got a billygoat that pulls him on his sled,
And Kenneth's got a ponycart; but pa looked cross and said
I mustn't talk so foolish when I asked him if I might
Go trade our baby for a pony or a goat, last night.

I s'pose he knew *nobody'd* trade
A goat for any baby made!
I wouldn't mind it, I believe, if any boy I knew
Would *envy* me for what we've got, but that's
what they won't do!

THE LONELY CHILD

IT takes so long to grow up big and get to
to be a man,
I wisht sometimes that I'd been born as old as
Mary Ann;
(She is the cook, and she's so old her teeth come
out at night),
'Cause then I wouldn't want a boy to play with
or to fight.
But now I go upstairs and down
And get in people's way,
Because there ain't *no* children here
To play with every day.

The house next door is big and fine, but nobody
lives there;
And all the winders, like big eyes, just stare at
me, and stare,
Until I run back in our house and 'tend like I
can't see,
And feel my way around the rooms till ma,
she says to me:
"My goodness, Rob, what is this game?
Pretending you are blind?
Dear me! The child has surely got
A most peculiar mind."

I've ast my pa to go and buy a brother for me,
too;
But he jest shakes his head and says that it
would never do;

And then he takes a book up quick and reads
to me and tries
To make me laugh and talk to him; but some-
times ma, she cries.
But even then I seem to see
The empty house next door
And all those big, dark window-eyes
That stared at me before.

Some time I'm going to run away and find a
father-man
Who has whole lots of boys and girls—for I
am sure I can—
And when I do, I'm going to ast him please to
come and take
The house next door and live in it—and—do
it for my sake!
And if he does, oh, won't it be
A happy day for me?
I'll get a lot of brothers, then,
Without *no* bother—see?

THE LITTLE FELLER'S GONE

TH' little feller's gone! Since he was so big,
him an' I
Have been like good old cronies, agreein' on
the sly
To skip the years between.
He was jest goin' on five years—an' I am
"Grandpa Brown,"
Although he named me "Santa Claus" when
fust he come to town—
An' my white beard he seen.
But now it seems to me a'most
As soon as he was born,
Th' little feller's gone.

He won't be standin' by the gate to holler to
me, "Hi!
Wait fer me, Santy!" like he done when I went
stumpin' by
T' fetch the cows back home.
We'll never sit agin an' argue which way we
should go;
Or figger if that bird was jest a blackwing er
a crow,
Nor through the meadows roam.
Fer he has found a place up there
Where it is always dawn—
Th' little feller's gone.

He was so full of fun I uster feel my heavy
years
Drop from me when I went with him. Some-
times he'd pull my ears
And say, "Hear dat Bob White?
Dat is a quail a-whistlin' in de woods, some-
where—le's go
An' ketch him—we can sprinkle salt upon his
tail, you know!"
And then he'd laugh outright;
But now, I don't take int'rust in
A thing that's goin' on—
Th' little feller's gone.

It must be right, but somehow I can't look at
it that way—
Why should he go, so young and good, and
me—so worn out—stay?
But mebbe up in heaven he will think of me
and wait
And holler "Hi!" when he seems me a-limpin'
to the Gate,
And mebbe (where is my old han'kerchief
a-got to now?)
He'll say to Peter, "Let him in—*I* like him,
anyhow!"

THE FISHERMAN'S SON

WHEN pa comes back home from his trip,
All brown and freckle-faced,
He's fatter than he's been for months—
There ain't no cloth to waste
When he puts on his old fall suit
And sits out on the lawn,
And tells about the fish he caught—
But my! how ma does yawn!

Pa smokes a puff or two, and then
He says, "You ought to see
The one I caught on Thursday—long
As 'tis from you to me.
I had him on the bank; yes, sir,
As sure as you are born,
And then he jumped right back again—"
But ma—how she does yawn!

I got a hook and line that ain't
Like pa's, but still it's fun
To go down to the creek and fish
And keep out of the sun.
Ma gives me sandwiches to eat,
And when the last bite's gone
I guess I go to sleep, sometimes—
At least I know I yawn.

But one day I *did* ketch a fish;
Ma took it, and it weighed
A pound, she said; but pa looked cross
And said, "It must have strayed."
We had it cooked for supper, too,
And ma and I ate some;
But pa, he wouldn't, and ma laughed;
But all she *said* was "hu-u-m!"

THE DOG CONFESSES

I AM a lucky dog, I know, and all my friends agree
The people that I live with now are good as gold to me
Because three times I saved a life—and that is why they give
Me everything a dog could want—and will, while I shall live.
But I've a conscience, and I must
Confess the truth—or else I'll bust!

One day the cart that Bobbie drives ran up on pony's heels,
And off he bolted! I went, too, and mixed up with the wheels,
Until the cart came to a stop, and Bobbie-boy was saved—
Then folks wept o'er the noble way that I, a dog, behaved.
(The truth is, I got in that mix
Avoiding pony's vicious kicks!)

Another time, when Bobbie went to play out on the dock
He fell into the water there, (he'd stumbled on a block);

I sprang in after him, of course, and dragged
him back to land—
Then everybody said the way I acted was "just
grand."
(The rat that I was chasing when
I plunged, I never saw again!)

You see this stubby tail of mine? I got that
when a car
Came near to crushing Bobbie-boy—it gave us
all a jar;
I knocked him off the track in time, but one
wheel caught my tail
And cut it short; it hurt, of course, and I let
out a wail—
(The cur that I had hoped to fight
Across the street, was out of sight!)

So, though I haven't meant to be a noble brute
at all,
I have to take the praise they give, and hear
them patiently;
But there is comfort in this thought—although
it may seem small—
There are some human heroes who are "pos-
ing"—just like me!

BR'ER RABBIT IN DE BRESH PILE

BR'ER RABBIT sorter snoozin' in de Big
Bresh Pile,
Years laid back an' pink eyes shet up tight,
Snow a-layin' deep an' gittin' deeper all de
while—
Br'er Rabbit glad dat he is outer sight.
Pretty soon he hear a noise—dat's Br'er Fox,
he know,
Gropin' th'ough de quiet woods, out in de cold
an' snow;
"Is dat you, Br'er Rab?" he say—but Br'er
Rab lay low
An' never let on dat he heerd him right.

"Come out an' take a little stroll," seys Br'er
Fox, seys he,
Sniffin' at de bresh pile an' walkin' all aroun';
"Much obleeged," seys Br'er Rab; "but dis
will do fer me—
Hate ter walk when snow is on de groun'."
"Woods is lookin' pretty," says B'rer Fox; "de
sun
Is shinin' jest like diamon's—come on, and
have some fun!"
"Hafter thank you kindly, but my diamon' days
is done,"
Seys Br'er Rab, "dey huhts my eyes, I foun'."

Br'er Fox, he lick he chops, an' set down where
he at
(Gotter git some plan to bring him out);
Den he say, "Dere's lettuce here—make you
nice an' fat!"
But Br'er Rab lay back he haid an' shout:
"Oh, Br'er Fox, you surely is a liar—dat you is;
De lettuce days is done gone by—an' all de
leaves is friz;
You'll hafter try anudder way—mah name is
Leery Liz!"
(Ol' Br'er Rabbit slangy, widdout doubt!)

"Dar comes a man!" seys Br'er Fox; "he gotter
dog an' gun!
Br'er Rab, you better come wid me!"
"Ef dat is true," seys Br'er Rab, "*you* orter
jump an' run—
He gwine t' shoot when youah red haid he
see!"
"I got a better house dan dis," seys Br'er Fox;
"come on
And live wid me—I treat you well—de man
and dog is gone!"
"An' s'ply you wid fresh meat? Oh, no, I
hasn't jest bin bawn,"
Seys Br'er Rab; "you make me laff," seys he.

Den Br'er Fox, he slink away, and bahk like
he was sad,
An' Br'er Rab, he shake he sides wid laffin'—
ain't he bad?
He small, but still, he gotter mind—an' jest fer
dat he glad—
Ol' Br'er Rabbit, in de Big Bresh Pile!

WHEN

WHEN to the tired heart and soul and brain
There comes, at last, the Unrepeated Call,
Where Silence and Eternal Rest are all
Ahead of me, without one touch of pain—

Pause at the edge of this desired Dawn,
Turn down a glass, and then—Be glad I'm gone!

For what the Future holds who knows, or cares?
The Past is done, the Now is here alway—
So, lighten it for those who needs must stay,
Breathe no regrets for him who onward fares.

Back to the Night, face to the coming Dawn,
Bid him God-speed, and then—Be glad he's gone!

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